

## B-1 crews benefit from coalition training in Bright Star '99

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A B-1B from the 28th Bomb Wing at Ellsworth Air Force Base, S.D., flies over the pyramids in Egypt during Bright Star '99. Four B-1s from Ellsworth were among the 396 coalition aircraft that flew more than 3,000 sorties during the joint and combined coalition exercise involving 11 countries. (Photo by Staff Sgt. James Varhegyi)

*by Tech. Sgt. Ann Bennett  
Air Force Print News*

**CAIRO WEST AIR BASE, Egypt** -- For an Air Force B-1B Lancer aircrew member, the hands-on, face-to-face training with coalition forces during Bright Star '99 was a significant gain for him and other members of the unit.

Capt. Derek Emmons, a B-1 instructor weapon systems officer deployed from Ellsworth Air Force Base, S.D., said it's always great to get face-to-face with the coalition forces to see how they really do things. "You can learn a lot," he said.

Four B-1Bs from the 28th Bomb Wing at Ellsworth were among the 396 aircraft that flew more than 3,000 sorties during the exercise. Other Air Force aircraft that participated in Bright Star included three KC-135s assigned to the 100th Air Refueling Wing at Royal Air Force Mildenhall, England and two E-3 (Airborne Warning and Control System) aircraft.

"We have outstanding training here," agreed Lt. Col. Jeffry Smith, commander of the 37th Expeditionary Bomb Squadron here who is also deployed from Ellsworth. "The training we have in the U.S. is significantly different from the training over here. Not just from the desert perspective and working out of a bare-base environment, but more importantly, working with

our coalition partners.

"It's important here not only for the crewmembers, maintainers and aviators alike, who have never had the opportunity to do this outside the continental U.S., but it's equally important for our coalition partners to be able to see what the aircraft (B-1) brings to the fight," he added.

He said recognizing the capabilities of the B-1 are important so that when the aircraft is included in future war plans, the planners know how to employ them.

Besides being able to fly day or night in all kinds of weather, and at altitudes from about 200 feet to above 30,000 feet, Ellsworth's B-1s can now deploy joint-direct attack munitions, which is a Global Positioning System-guided munition.

With the Block D aircraft which Ellsworth has, "the B-1 today is essentially a separate and different airplane," the commander said. "The ability to put out 24 2,000-pound weapons inside of about 13 meters to a target brings an immense power to the fight."

"We now have a precision-type weapon to go along with our all-weather bomber," Emmons said. And with the B-1s carrying a third more JDAMs than the B-2s (24 JDAMs compared to the 16 carried by the B-2s), Emmons said it brings a lot of capability to the commanders who will employ the B-1s in the future.

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